MONTEREY NEWS

March 2015

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The Town

by Dave Irland

Notes on Select Board meetings from January 26 through February 18

Note: Scheduling conflicts, holiday and weather cancellations, and Select Board executive sessions this month have resulted in a compressed report. Normal content will resume in the next issue.

Town Salaries and Budget

The board discussed town employee salaries with an eye toward increasing them in a more systematic way than in the past, perhaps partially tying raises to job performance rather than basing them solely on cost of living. The board did vote to look at a 2% across-the-board salary increase for town employees with special attention paid to how this raise might affect the town budget. Wayne Burkhart, chair of the Select Board, also brought up town employee evaluations, which traditionally have been fairly casual, and suggested that a more formal system might be considered in the future.

Stanley Ross, chair of the finance committee, warned against the automatic addition of two more health plans to the budget with the proposed addition of a transfer station attendant / highway department employee, as well as a new town clerk, when no transfer attendant had been approved yet, nor was it known whether or not the new town clerk would actually need insurance.

The topic of whether to appoint or elect certain town officials came to the forefront again. Mr. Burkhart argued that elected officials, even if inexperienced at the start, were often able to grow into the positions they occupied. The point had been raised that elected officials often lacked the actual credentials for a particular job, and that appointing employees would open up the positions to a larger pool of applicants. Elected officials have to be town residents, whereas appointments can be made for people who live anywhere. Kenn Basler, Select Board member, suggested that this be voted on at the next town meeting.

Complaints concerning unpaid training shifts for new police officers seem to have been heard: the board discussed the possibility of phasing out the police department practice of not paying new officers during their training periods.

Shawn Tryon, fire chief, had asked for a special article expenditure of $60,000 for twenty new ready-suits for his fire crew. The suits are required by law to be replaced every ten years, and that ten years is about over for the last batch of suits. Scott Jennsen, select board member, wondered about cheaper alternatives. This pushed a money-oriented discussion into a proposal to limit the expense of fitting a new roof to the Town Hall to the $30,000 it would likely cost to use architectural shingles rather than the $60,000 metal roof originally proposed.

Maureen Banner

Winter dog show

Equipment Sharing

In earlier meetings it had been suggested that the town might save by sharing large roadwork and maintenance equipment with surrounding towns. Shawn Tryon, director of operations, had some conversations with his counterparts from some neighboring towns to investigate this possibility. The idea was originally met with enthusiasm, but a revisionist attitude has swept the board and Stanley Ross, finance committee chair, wondered about shared maintenance arrangements and the difficulties that would arise with various imaginable equipment breakdown scenarios, the assignment of responsibility, blame, etc. Mr. Ross came out very strongly against the sharing concept. Meetings were scheduled for further discussion, though the final decision would be left to town voters.

Highway

Shawn Tryon presented a list of contractors who might be able to help with plowing during the larger storms, with one such storm imminent as he spoke. The rate for drivers was increased by two dollars to twenty dollars an hour.

In the face of such extreme storms, Police Chief Backhaus was asked to draft papers for the rapid declaration of a state of emergency. Further, it was voted that should the state of Massachusetts vote a state of emergency, Monterey would automatically follow suit. The idea of a "reverse 911" was also floated several times, and the board had Chief Backhaus's assurance that the implementation of a no-travel warning to residents would not require a lot of work given that the department had been compiling a data base of just such pre-recorded warnings.

A snow emergency was in fact declared not long after the above discussion, on January 4.

Executive Sessions

Due to Rudy Gero's complaints against the Police Department and his accusations of special attention being paid to shorting him his fair share of detail work, the board determined that it needed to go into executive session with the town council and Chief Backhaus. Two such sessions took place during February, the results of which will be forthcoming.

Town Clerk Resignation

Town Clerk Emily Johnson appeared before the board, resignation letter in hand, while promising to help ease the transition to a new town clerk. No reportable reasons for leaving were mentioned before the board. The Select Board appointed Jennifer Brown as town clerk. She was later elected at the special town meeting on February 26 to serve until the May 2 town meeting.

Planning Board Hearing

Accessory Dwelling Units

The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Thursday, March 12, 2015, at 7 p.m. The hearing is to present a zoning bylaw proposal to allow the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by right on lots with a minimum of two acres and two hundred feet of road frontage, regardless of the district. The accessory dwelling unit would require a building permit and may be no more than 650 square feet. ADUs may be either attached to the primary dwelling or detached. At least two parking spaces must provided.

Accessory dwelling units can allow seniors and others to remain in their homes while providing a private dwelling for support help; ADUs can provide rental income for property owners and increase the diversity of housing stock in Monterey, making housing units available to moderate-income households who might otherwise have difficulty finding housing.

The Planning Board worked on the zoning bylaw for several months and researched similar zoning bylaws in surrounding towns for comparisons. We are striving to make the zoning bylaw short and simple. Please come to the public hearing and give the Planning Board some feedback.

—Maggie Leonard
Chair, Planning Board

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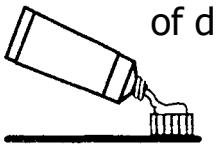

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Access to Employment
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Our work helps to give our lives meaning, provides structure to our days, and puts dollars in our pockets. However, for those of us who have a disability, US Department of Labor statistics say that we are less than half as likely to be employed as people without disabilities. Fortunately, there are agencies that can help the disabled find training and work. (See the last paragraph for how to access to a list of helpful agencies.) If you could use support, begin by contacting these agencies to help you consider what you want to do and what jobs and training are available. Talk with people who are already doing the type of work you want to do. Look into volunteer, apprentice, or intern opportunities. Talk with your Rehabilitation Counselor or the Social Security Administration about transitioning to work with a "trial work period."

The Americans with Disabilities Act stands behind you to protect you from employment discrimination. Tell an employer if you need a reasonable accommodation such as time off for doctors' appointments or visits to a therapist, providing a wheelchair accessible work site, braille materials, a sign language interpreter, or other accommodations that will make it possible for you to do the job. As long as the accommodation is not unduly costly or disruptive for the employer, and as long as you can perform the major functions of your job and show up reliably, you should not be let go due to your disability.

To find work, network in every way you can, tell people, share on social media, look in the newspapers and online. Many jobs are found through word of mouth. Together with the Town of Sheffield Commission on Disabilities (COD), we've put together a list of agencies and organizations in Berkshire County that provide job counseling, job training, computer training, peer counseling, advocacy, assistive technology, and more. This list will soon be posted on the town hall bulletin board. You can also email me for a copy at marymakuc@gmail.com or Sheffield's COD Chair, Laura Grunfeld, at Laura@EveryonesInvited.com. May the work you find be both fulfilling and rewarding!

—Mary Makuc
Monterey ADA Coordinator
—Laura Grunfeld,
Sheffield COD Chair

Kelly Tryon

Scott Jenssen wins the Parks Department Chili Cook-Off for the second year in a row. Winners from left to right are: Kit Patten, vegetarian; first place winner Scott Jenssen; third place winners Julio Rodriguez and Pat Soloman; and second place winner Paul Rapp.

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Meryl Wilen Greenfield
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reception: Sat., March 28, 6-7:30pm
Supported by Friends of the Monterey Library

Winter Road Maintenance
Doing Well in a Difficult Winter

This has been an exceptionally cold and snowy winter. While we have been spared a great deal of freezing rain, the deep cold has challenged the highway crew's ability to keep the roads safe and passable. We would like all residents to understand the considerations that go into road maintenance decisions.

Salt Use

Each and every storm is different. There is no one practice or single set of standards that controls the spreading rate of salt for all conditions. This year we have faced the problem of extreme cold. As the temperature drops, the effectiveness of salt drops. Salt can melt five times the amount of snow at 30° than at 20°. When we get to 0° it loses its melting ability completely. That said, there have been times this year when the roads have remained snow covered longer, but only until the temperature reached a point that salt would do its work. It's during this period, and during a storm, that we ask all residents to reduce travel to a minimum.

Winter Storm Operations

Paved roads—Salt is applied on the main roads and at town properties during a storm at a rate that will keep the snow from bonding to the pavement and will allow quicker cleanup when the storm has ended. Snow is plowed on paved roads with the goal of having no more than three inches at a time on paved roads. Road temperature, air temperature, wind, snowfall rates, time of day, ice pellets, rain, freezing rain or sleet all affect the snowplow timing and amount of salt applications. On school days, bus routes are done before other roads as the buses start running by 6:30 a.m.

Gravel roads—Gravel roads are plowed after the paved roads and our goal is to have no more than six inches accumulate on any unpaved road. Roads are sanded usually at the end of the snowfall, and sand is reapplied as needed.

Rain, freezing rain—Salt is spread on paved roads and town properties before rainfall when the road temperatures are below or near freezing to prevent roads from icing up. Salt is reapplied as needed to prevent freeze up. On unpaved roads, sand is applied when possible. During a rainstorm with road temperatures below freezing, unpaved roads freeze instantly, and sand that is applied is quickly frozen over. During a long rain event, we try to sand the gravel roads three to four times a day to allow some travel, but remember—they will freeze up on you rather quickly. We cannot keep them passable all the time.

Monterey's highway crew does its best to keep the roads open and safe during the winter months. Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of employees or equipment, and when operations are effective. Factors that may delay snow and ice removal include severe cold, significant winds, limited visibility, and rapid accumulations of snow. It is during these times that residents should stay off the roads. We ask residents to work with us by using good judgment and by recognizing that they are traveling at their own risk in inclement weather.

— Monterey Select Board

Dog Licensing & Rabies Vaccine Clinic March 21

The 2015 Dog Licensing & Rabies Vaccine Clinic will be held at the Monterey fire station on Saturday, March 8, from 8 to 11 a.m.

The charge for the rabies vaccine shot is $14. The dog license fees are $4 for neutered/spayed (please bring certificate) and $10 for unspayed/unneutered. Please bring previous rabies vaccination certificate (not tag). Dogs must be on leashes and cats in carriers.

All dogs must be licensed by March 31, 2015, or owners will be issued a $25 late fee.

—Jennifer Brown
Monterey Town Clerk

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It Really Has Been Cold and Snowy

National Weather Service data from the Pittsfield Municipal Airport from 1938 through the 17th of February, shows this February to have been especially cold. The only February with a colder average temperature than this one was in 1943. This is right on the heels of January, which was the eighth coldest in all that time.

The record snowfall for one month in that same time period goes to January 2011, with 52.2 inches. As of this February 17th, this has already been the seventh snowiest month with 31.2 inches thus far, and it's still snowing into the last week of the month.

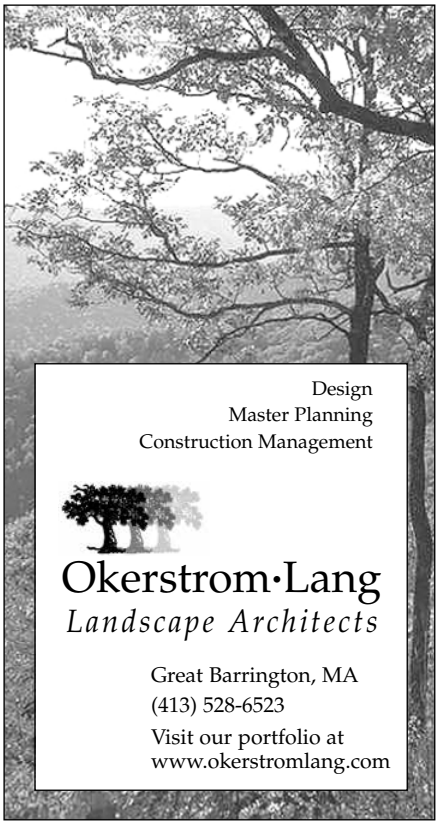
But as you read this, it is March, and to quote a friend, "the world is tipping," which while not technically accurate, creates a hopeful impression.

(With thanks to the *Berkshire Eagle*.)

Maureen Banner

It's been a great year for skiing and snowshoeing on snow that has stayed cold and loose for weeks and weeks.

Daylight Savings Time
"Spring Ahead"
Sunday, March 8, at 2 a.m.



Special Town Meeting
Voting Results

A special town meeting was held on the evening of Thursday, February 26. For specific information on each article, you can find the special town meeting warrant on the homepage of the town website, montereyma.gov, with a link to "Annual Town Meeting Warrants."

A secret ballot was cast for town clerk, with Jennifer Brown as the only nominee. She was elected with a vote of 54-1

Article 1: The town approved initiating the process to aggregate electrical load to take advantage of a competitive electricity market. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Article 2: The town approved spending $127,000 to purchase a new highway department truck. The vote in favor was a majority.

Article 3: The town approved raising the treasurer's salary by $1,000 to $14,567. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Article 4: The town approved transferring $15,000 to the Friends of Lake Garfield for the purpose of combatting invasive milfoil. The vote in favor was a majority.

Article 5: The town approved transferring $4,000 to the Parks Commission for an overage due to the Jaime's Court project. The vote in favor was a majority.

Article 6: The town approved transfering $23,175 to the Parks commission for the completion of Jamie's Court. The vote in favor was a majority.

Article 7: The town approved borrowing $7.74 million by the Southern Berkshire Regional School District for the Roof/Boiler Project at Mt. Everett school campus. The vote in favor was a majority.

Articles 8 through 21: The town was asked to consider a range of changes to the zoning bylaws. Please refer to the warrant for a description of each article. Below are the voting results for the zoning bylaws articles.

Articles 8, 9, and 10: Approved unanimously.

Articles 11, 12, and 13: Not approved.

Articles 14 and 15: Approved unanimously.

Article 16: Not approved, 28-15.

Articles 17 and 18: Approved unanimously.

Article 19: Approved unanimously with an amendment.

Article 20: Not approved unanimously.

Article 21: Approved 43-1.

—Jennifer Brown
Monterey Town Clerk

Will Marsh

> *Meanwhile, in Wilmington, NC, after a heavy snowfall overnight on February 23, Will and Glynis Marsh debated exactly which wax they needed for their skiis.*

Berkshire Botanical Garden

Farm in the Garden Camp

Have your five-to-fourteen-year-olds join us for one of our six, one-week sessions between June 29 and August 7. Children learn the connections that exist between themselves, nature, the food we eat, and the friendships that develop in between. There are baby animals to feed, vegetables to tend to, songs to sing, food to prepare, and a life-long relationship with the outdoors to start building. New this year is a program for campers from eleven to fourteen years old. This program will focus on special projects designed to give back to the Farm in the Garden Camp community. Projects will be unique from week to week.

Spaces are limited and the camp sells out every year, so don't delay—reserve a spot for your campers today.

For more information and to register, go to BerkshireBotanical.org/Education.

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Council on Aging Report

The "Meet and Greet" meeting on February 11 was attended by ten people. The snow had been cleared; the coffee and cookies were delicious. Laughter and ideas for the council's future flowed. A bus trip is being planned for March or April. We will visit Hyde Park, the home of Franklin D. Roosevelt. To reserve a bus we will need twenty-five people. If you are interested, please call Maryellen Brown at 528-1598. If you would like an occasional note on items of interest and event planning, please send your email address to Kay Purcell, wpurcell@bcn.net

—Kay Purcell

Burning Permits in Monterey

This year the Monterey fire department will be using an online application for burning permits. They will be available from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. when weather conditions allow. Fires are to be started after 10 a.m. and be extinguished by 4 p.m. Open burning season is from January 15, 2015, to May 1, 2015.

To obtain a permit or to read the regulations, go to the website bcburnpermits.com. If you cannot obtain a permit online, you can call 413-443-7220 ext. 117 between 8:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

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Democratic Caucus March 7

On Saturday, March 7, at 10:30 a.m., the Democratic town committee will meet in the Monterey UCC church basement to discuss open town offices and the search for candidates.

All registered Democrats in Monterey are urged to attend the Democratic caucus on Saturday, March 21, at 10:30 a.m. in the church basement. At this time we will have the task of deciding by vote which candidates we wish to endorse for town offices.

Anyone interested in having the endorsement of the Democrats should make an appearance at the caucus and, if that is not possible, at least send a letter of interest for a particular office. The caucus can endorse residents who are not Democrats.

Persons interested in nomination may contact Wayne Burkhart at wdburkharts@gmail.com.

Republican Caucus March 22

The Monterey Republican committee will hold its caucus on Sunday, March 22, 2015 at 1 p.m. in the church basement for the purpose of nominating candidates for the local elections to be held in May. Anyone interested in the Republican nomination for any of the seats up for election should contact Mark Makuc, 528-1382 or at mjjminmonterey@yahoo.com. It is not necessary to be a Republican to get a nomination. It is necessary to be a Republican to vote in the caucus, and all registered Republican voters in Monterey are requested to attend this caucus.

Town Office Elections

Elected town offices to be filled are the following:

Board of Appeals, 5 years
Board of Assessors, 3 years
Board of Health, 3 years
Cemetery Comm., 3 years
Finance Comm., 3 years
Library Trustee, 3 years
Library Trustee, 3 years
Library Trustee, 2 year
Moderator, 1 year
Park Comm., 3 years
Park Comm., 3 years
Planning Board, 5 years
Planning Board, 2 years
Select Board, 3 years
Tree Warden, 1 year

Some positions are remainders of full terms. Some positions have incumbents who will be candidates for reelection. Nomination papers can be picked up at the town clerk's office and need to be returned by 5 p.m. on March 14 so they can be signed by the registrars. The last day to withdraw nomination papers is March 30.

For more information, contact Wayne Burkhart at 528-1114 or wdburkharts@gmail.com. The annual town meeting is Saturday, May 2. Remember that the town election ballot is on Tuesday, May 5, at the firehouse.

P.O. Box 9

Internet Options are Good!

I have followed the WiredWest story for some time now, as well as the recent insertion of Fiber Connect, LLC, into the discussion. Municipal broadband exists for two reasons. One is to provide service in underserved (mostly rural) areas and the other is to provide competition in locations served by monopolies. Recent efforts by several states to limit municipal broadband have all been decried as efforts by the telecommunications lobby to squash competition. Fortunately Massachusetts is not one of those states, and WiredWest has a good chance of realizing their goals.

While Fiber Connect must have profit as one of its goals, it is clearly not their primary purpose (or they would be unlikely to start in Monterey). We are fortunate to have a town resident capable of pulling off such a project. I see no reason (economic, environmental, or aesthetic) to limit the ability of Fiber Connect to install their conduits underground. As mentioned in the Fiber Connect article in the February issue, there is no economic risk to the town, only benefits. When completed, most of Monterey will be served by a state-of-the-art network that will be the envy of neighboring communities. WiredWest can still move forward, and the two entities can compete for customers by providing superior service at a competitive price.

—David Quisenberry

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Time for Change

Dear Monterey residents,

I'm writing to announce my intention to run for Select Board this May. The last three years have brought little relief from the dysfunction and discontent in town hall, nor much relief from a general dissatisfaction with town hall; we've witnessed too many resignations, too much unprofitable bickering, innuendo, destructive behavior, confusion and disorder, and too few successful resolutions.

While we may want to find fault with any number of participants, it's become plainly apparent to many concerned residents that select boards, made up of volunteers with differing managerial capacities and business acumen, can no longer be expected to provide the kind of workaday expertise increasingly complex municipal government requires, and that the time has come for a structural change in the way we do business. I agree. Effectively speaking, Monterey is the last municipality in southern Berkshire county, which, with an approximately $3-million-plus budget, still operates without some form of professional, experienced town administration. Hiring a part-time administrator—shared with another town—would benefit both our community and our appointed and elected officials working in town hall with only a modest increase in overall administrative costs.

What select boards can still provide, however, is a sense of mission and vision, and the strong leadership necessary for the planning and implementation of productive, positive change. There are a number of long-term realities we must face squarely—particularly the future of our school district and of all school districts in south county—and I would like to help address these and other issues with forward-looking and effective solutions.

For registered Monterey Republicans and Democrats, caucuses will be held this month in order to nominate and endorse candidates for open town offices. I urge all of you to check the calendar for the dates of these committee meetings and attend them. Voters, first and last, are Monterey's chief leaders, and your participation is essential to good government.

Thank you,

Jonathan Sylbert

(See page 7 for information about party caucuses. —Ed.)

Why?

Over the past few months I have gotten to know a woman whose eight-month-old grandson was diagnosed with a rhabdoid tumor on his liver. The little boy was thriving until he was six months old, when his mom noticed he was sleeping a lot and his tummy felt rigid. Once the diagnosis was made, he began receiving treatment, in an attempt to shrink the mass before it could be removed. At first, the tumor seemed to be responding favorably to the drugs, but then progress slowed and eventually stopped.

The oncologists at Children's Hospital and Dana Farber in Boston had no more options, but in a last-ditch effort and at the urging of the parents, a referral was made to St. Jude Hospital in Memphis. St. Jude accepted the little boy's case for a drug trial the hospital was conducting. So, on February 16, the baby and his parents flew to Memphis, hoping, along with the rest of us who knew about this family, for a miracle.

On February 18, St. Jude, after examining this little guy, came to the conclusion that the cancer had spread too far into his lungs, and further treatment would be of no use. So the family returned to New England to make their baby's last days as happy and pain free as possible.

I'm writing about this unfathomably sad situation this family is facing as a wakeup call to all of us and especially in light of the Select Board's recent actions that have targeted two of our town's most dedicated and reliable employees in an attempt to discredit their reputations and control their behavior on the job, despite the far-reaching consequences this may have.

If, in our daily activities, we're so hell-bent on raising our own standing in the community that we don't care who we're trampling in the process, or if we're so reluctant to involve ourselves in messy situations or conflict that we choose to stand by, no matter who pays the price, then are our lives really worth living? If we're dealing dishonestly with people or making their lives miserable simply to advance our own status or to put a few more dollars in our own pockets, is the outcome really worth the price?

Life is fraught with so much tragedy, suffering, and pain that is beyond our control. Why then should any of us consciously and deliberately go about causing others distress just because an opportunity presents itself?

—Susan Gallant

Lifeguards Needed

Monterey Town Beach at Lake Garfield

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Lake Garfield Ice Frights

Paul Lang

This past Sunday, February 22, was a beautiful day in the Berkshires—fresh snow, sun, and temperatures in the 20s. I invited Barbara Dahlmann to go snowshoeing with me and suggested that we go on Lake Garfield. I had seen people on it a couple of weeks ago and the below-zero weather seemed to ensure that the lake would be frozen.

As I pulled up to the lake, I ran into Robin Fried, who was taking a walk but wasn't able to join us with her snowshoes. "Let me know if you need any help," she said. Why would Barbara or I need help?

As Barbara and I worked our way down to the lake, in deep snow that reached almost to our thighs, I took a step forward as the land leveled out. The next thing I knew, my shoe and boot sank deep down through the ice and into freezing water. The lake wasn't frozen solid! I tried to work my snowshoe and boot out of the hole but was unable to do it. Finally, I was able to pull my foot out of the boot and there I was, sitting in the snow in my freezing wet sock. Both Barbara and I were afraid to move!

Robin spotted us as she was walking back to her house on Point Road, saw our distress, and came running. Fearlessly, she trudged down to the water and, after ten minutes or so of digging, was able to save my snowshoe, my boot—and me! I crawled up the hill to safe land. I headed back with Robin to her house, where Judy Greenwald gave me warm, dry socks and loaned me a pair of her boots.

The two lessons I learned:

1—Don't snowshoe on Lake Garfield.

2—It's great to have friends and neighbors like Robin and Judy!!

—Dorene Beller

Dorene sent her story not only to the Monterey News, *but to friends and neighbors. Her friend, Jane Lang, was moved to add her story.*

Wow! That was a close one! Where in the lake did this happen? I must ask because here is our frozen lake story:

Paul and I spent a lovely weekend at the lake on February 5th through the 8th. We loved looking at all the ice fisher-people setting up, fishing, and BBQing. The temperatures were hovering in the single digits if not lower. Paul was actually watching everyone come and go all through the weekend and took lots of pictures. One of the pictures we took delight in taking was that of a small bus! It had brought about ten people or more to the center of the lake for their recreation that day.

On Saturday, we were leaving the house around dusk when Paul noticed that there were EMT cars with lights flashing around the bend on Point Road. He walked over to find that the bus had also fallen through the ice approximately around Hy and Myrna's house. Is that where you were? Paul noted that the bus was making trips back and forth to bring the people to the beach side where their cars were parked. He noticed three people that were just standing in the middle of the lake waiting for the bus to return, but it never did.

We subsequently found them walking on the road and gave them a lift to their car on Tyringham Road. (I suppose they figured out that the bus was not returning!) No one was hurt, thank goodness, but it gives rise to the question of how one would know if the ice is frozen enough at various points on the lake. One must wonder, if the lake is not frozen after multiple days or weeks of below-zero weather, when would it be? I had to tell you this story to confirm the tenuousness of our seemingly frozen lake.

So the moral of the story is: You can't be too careful—even buses can fall in the lake!!

—Jane Lang

Fire Chief Shawn Tryon had this to say about the incident:

This is becoming a common thing to happen in that particular spot on the lake. Over the last ten years many vehicles have fallen through. Fortunately it is not deep in that area.

It should be stated that with the lake being drawn down, the water flows more quickly in more defined areas, which doesn't allow the ice to freeze as thick as it would in other areas. The ice should never be trusted unless you really understand the lake and its behavior in the winter. This is true for all ice everywhere.

If you stay off the ice, you won't fall through.

—Shawn Tryon
Monterey Fire Chief

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March at the Knox Gallery

Alan Roland's watercolor exhibit, *The Magical Ravine off Wallace Hall Road*, beginning on February 6, had an enthusiastic crowd attending the opening the following night. Local visitors to the gallery will surely enjoy the renderings of this Monterey location. Dramatic and constantly shifting sunlight and shadows inspire Roland, a lifelong watercolorist, to return again and again to capture the varied perspectives of the massive rocks, trees, swirling waters, and ponds of the ravine.

The exhibit continues through March 21 and can be viewed during library hours.

SPACE-out-LINED: Paintings and Photographs, by Meryl Wilen-Greenfield, will open on March 28, with a reception the next evening, Saturday, March 29, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The artist will talk briefly about her influences, work, and process at 6:45 p.m.

Wilen-Greenfield reports that she "landed in Monterey in 1986 when my focus was on parenting, public policy, and politics. Since the turn of the century, two more Ps have expanded my repertoire: painting and photography."

She received a BA from Smith College in 1956 and amMaster's degree in city and regional planning twenty years later from Rutgers University, but a painting class at IS183 in 2001 opened a new world to her. She returned to Neththese

Maureen Banner

Julie Shapiro and Alan Roland at Alan's Knox Gallery opening on February 7. His work will be on exhibit through March 21.

York City and enrolled in an abstract expressionism class at the Art Students League. Why modern art? "I thought it would be easy because I wouldn't need to draw," she explains. "I could just play with form and texture and splashes of color … just as I'd loved to do when I decorated and redecorated my houses. So abstract art it was."

But easy it wasn't, she laughs. After years of work the artist admits that she has barely begun to understand the language of abstraction. More recently she began photographing images as an adjunct to her studies of abstraction, and through these mediums she strives to create both a sense of movement and of stillness in the open space created in her images. Working with a limited palette, disregarding the idea of perspective, she strives for an illusion of movement and balance. Her geometric forms in undefined space evoke reality along with the unreal, form against formlessness, known versus the imagined. "While a viewer may consider my work contemplative, destabilizing, or surreal, for me it is a reflection of the real world," Wilen-Greenfield states.

The exhibit continues through May 2 and can be viewed during library hours. Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, 452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 413-528-3795. Facebook.com/Knox Gallery. @ Knox_Gallery on Twitter.

—MaryPaul Yates

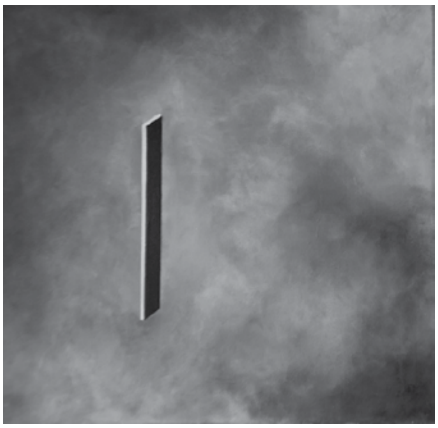

Photo courtesy of the artist

Untitled*, Meryl Welin-Greenfield*

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Monterey Library Services
Museum Passes and CWMARS

In recent months some of you have asked for a museum pass for the Clark Art Museum, since they have started charging admission all year round. We will be getting one pass that will be good for one admission in the near future. We have no say in how they choose to run their program. Each library will only get one pass.

If you or someone you know is vision-impaired and would like to take advantage of the Massachusetts Perkins Library, please let us know. It is as simple as a librarian certifying the need, and then you can take advantage of the many services that are offered. Not only do they lend out books, but they also lend out magazines and newspapers. It was pointed out that this program is very under used in the western part of the state, so they are hoping to get the word out. For more information on the services available through the Perkins Library, go to Perkins.org/Library.

Just a reminder, especially to those of you who have not been using your CWMARS card recently or who have never even registered for a card, there are so many ways to use that card. You will be able to go into more than 150 libraries in central and western Massachusetts, without leaving your home. It can be in the middle of a snowstorm or cold snap. Check CWMARS.org and you will find books, audio including Playaway (audio books player), movies, magazines, and assorted other items. While the Monterey Library has somewhere around nine thousand items, CWMARS has almost nine million. If you can find it in the catalog, you'll most likely be able to put a hold on it and have it sent to Monterey. That is just the beginning. There are e-books, downloadable audio and video, even databases. If you can't find it directly in CWMARS, you can look in the Virtual Catalog (available through CWMARS.org) and search much of Massachusetts and the Boston Public Library electronic resources. This is the best bargain in town. Take advantage of these services that are available at no charge with that CWMARS card.

—Mark Makuc
Library Director

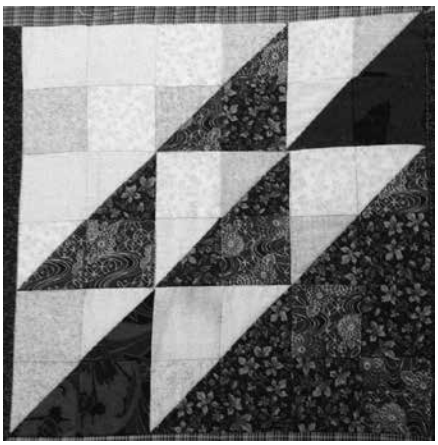
From the Meetinghouse
North Wind

February winds aren't supposed to be the ones with the reputation for gåreat kite flying. Lying awake in the dark while arctic winds surf the branches of nearby hardwoods and pines isn't supposed to generate peace of mind, either. But one night less than halfway through last month, I woke sometime between midnight and morning as the winds of February howled and whistled their way south through the Berkshires.

My first thought? "Oh, this is a wild one."

Soon the clatter of a branch against one of the windows briefly raised my heart rate. That sound faded and the wind carried on. A few memories and a few fears raised their heads. But then I remembered, *That's not now*. And I asked myself, *What would it be like to not slip into the past or into the future, but to simply witness the wind as it moves through the here and now?*

The moments became a stream, an exercise in simply being present. The wind blew. It played the trees like living instruments. The furnace kicked on: a low rumble. Then the furnace fan sang, too: a loud chugging whir. Neither household sound was one I even registered consciously most daytimes. The trio harmonized for a while, each voice distinct.



Mary Kate Jordan

This photo shows a traditional quilt square called North Wind. Can't you almost see the chill factor streaming in?

The whole, as with any good music, was greater than the sum of its parts. It generated gratitude. Gratitude for the working furnace and all its parts. For the fuel and for the company that provides it. For the strong house walls, windows, roof, foundation. For music, and for the here, now, heart, and ear to hear it.

As I write, we've yet to see whether March winds conform to expected behavior, bookending this month with traditional lamb- or lion-like dynamics. But I have high hopes—sky-high hopes—that whatever winds do blow won't be routed our way from the arctic north.

—Mary Kate Jordan

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Masters of the Medium
Maureen and Michael Banner

Michael and Maureen Banner of Monterey have been selected to receive the nation's top award for the excellence of their body of work in the field of silversmithing. In late March they will travel to Washington DC to attend the ceremony of the James Renwick Alliance, the supporting organization of the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The Renwick Alliance gives the "Master of the Medium" awards every two years in five different fields of craft work, and Maureen and Michael know most of the award winners in recent years as their colleagues through decades of art and craft shows.

The Banners have received much recognition over the years through private and state-level awards such as the Society of Arts and Crafts (MA), and through museum purchases, including three pieces bought by the Smithsonian. The first purchase by the Renwick Gallery more than twenty-five years ago was instrumental in determining the direction of their career. The Banners are the first couple to be awarded the "Master of the Medium" award by the Renwick Alliance.

John Polak

Pat Arnow

*Left: the silver teapot "*Mother and Child*," by Maureen and Michael Banner, is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.*

Monterey Community Center

January brought a transformation to the community center, as walls and windows have now created an inspiring space. Many thanks to the Monterey Highway Department who kept us plowed out so the work crew and the supply trucks could make it to the site; and many thanks to Eric Pedersen's crew who did such experienced and thorough carpentry work in conditions that were quite trying.

The frigid weather of February has shut down work on the former Wilson McLaughlin House, but nonetheless the committee is making progress and plans, lining up the work to be done when temperatures become more temperate. We are researching grant possibilities at the same time that we are grateful for the resounding success of our year-end fund appeal. We raised over $30,000 including purchases of all the windows and doors for the center. Looking ahead, we see plenty of work coming up that volunteers can help out with, both in skilled and unskilled ways. So please get in touch with Michael Banner (528-0421) or Joe Baker (528-9385) if you would like to donate some time and help out.

The committee is already planning our summer program, building on the success of last year when we held four outdoor events. We have many ideas in the hopper, and if you have a special request or offer, let us know. Certainly we will be holding one or more landscape painting workshops, a regular series of outdoor yoga sessions, some nature sessions such as wildflower identification and ecology, and quite likely one or more agricultural workshops connecting with our community garden. If you would like to learn more, or have ideas to contribute, plan on attending the March 18 Community Potluck supper. (See p. 14)

Interested in taking part in the garden? Get in touch. Moved to contribute financially? You'll find a link to our secure and easy online donation portal at our website: ccmonterey.org. Thank you for all the support.

—Friends of Wilson McLaughlin House

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Positive Visions of Aging
A Personal Inquiry in Monterey

Anything important that happens in Monterey often begins at the transfer station. Many times what is transferred is information, news, in this case a book review shared with me by Pat Salomon. She had just read *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande, and within a week I had purchased my own copy, which was already sold out at the Bookloft. Kit and I began reading it aloud on our holiday travels, and, simultaneously, Pat and I decided to approach Kyle and Barbara about a potluck topic that might grow out of it: How is Monterey aging? How can we support one another to do it even better?

I would like to highlight some parts of *Being Mortal* that inspired me the most. Whether you are currently living through your parents' process of coming to terms with old age or facing ityourself, Atul Gawande's words and thoughts are potentially life changing. For most of us here, Monterey is the place we consider home, both the community itself and our own personal dwellings. Mr. Gawande writes that in your own home, "*you* decide how to spend your time, how *you* share your space, and how *you* manage your possessions." Wherever we make our home, even once we need significant help to perform daily tasks, we seek to maintain autonomy, freedom, and a sense of self. Mere safety is not enough. Our need for a purpose in life does not change just because our health might.

In many cases, in the world in which we live, the medical profession and institutions have taken over the care of elders. Mr. Gawande writes, "Medical professionals concentrate on repair of health, not sustenance of the soul...For more than a half-century now, we have treated the trials of sickness, aging, and mortality as medical concerns... that experiment has failed…. We seek a life of worth and purpose, yet are routinely denied the conditions that might make it possible."

Happily, Mr. Gawande cites many positive and creative examples of aging in supportive, life-affirming situations that range from family support at home to innovative assisted living situations, many right here in New England. Read his book, especially chapters four and five, or go online to find out about initiatives like the Jessie F. Richardson Foundation, the Eden Alternative, and New Bridge—resources that can help you make unique choices for yourself or a loved one.

Again, I quote from *Being Mortal*: "Whatever the limits and travails we face, we want…to be the authors of our own lives. This is the very marrow of being human. As Ronald Dworkin wrote in his 1986 essay on the subject, 'Autonomy makes each of us responsible for shaping our own life…to lead our own lives rather than being led along them.' All we ask is to remain the writers of our own story. That story is ever changing. Over the course of our lives, we may encounter unimaginable difficulties. Our concerns and desires may shift. But whatever happens, we want to retain the freedom to shape our lives in ways consistent with our character and loyalties." — Connie Wilson

Mary Kate Jordan

Thinking of joining the stitching group on alternate Tuesday mornings? Here is Masho McAlister and Laraine Lippe at needle-play in the Knox Room. All are welcome.

Contributors

During this quiet time in Monterey, the paper especially appreciates people taking the time to think of us.

Natalie Manzino
Terry Rosen & Alan Hochman

Thai Yoga Bodywork

Local References *Sliding Scale*

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Monterey Cultural Council Seeking Volunteers

The Monterey Cultural Council is looking for individuals who would like to be a part of the team that funds various arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences for Monterey through the Massachusetts Cultural Council grants. As a few of our members must move on after their three- or six-year terms are up, we need new volunteers to keep the momentum going and continue to bring these cultural events to our town.

The council works hard to present a wide variety of talents to Monterey for all ages. It is part of our mission to support interesting, educational, and enjoyable cultural events that may include some of Monterey's own artists, craftspeople, writers, historians, musicians, and other gifted individuals or groups. We also work to bring talents from outside of town to the town.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please contact Wendy Jensen (wendygj@gmail.com) or Fiona DeRis (at the Roadside) for more information.

—Wendy Jensen
Chair, Monterey Cultural Council

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Community Potluck Supper
March 18

I'm writing this several hours after the February potluck, which was inspiring in a new way. The gathering talked about what was important to us as individuals,and as Montereyans as we age, having chosen Monterey as our place to age *in*. Pat Salomon and Connie Wilson arranged for and facilitated a great speaker, geriatrician Karen Preston, MD, of Lenox, who encouraged everyone to participate. We wished Shirley Olds a happy 90th birthday. We learned a lot about the Monterey Council on Aging and the services it offers and about the Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation.

Next month we are concentrating on the Monterey community center. Members of the Friends of the Wilson McLaughlin House will be on hand on March 18 to describe what the community center will be all about. There will be some photos of the current exciting state of the house, and there will be architect's drawings for those interested in seeing what remains to be finished up. Michael Banner will be on hand to talk about the construction plans; Mary Makuc will be there with her enthusiastic plans for the facility; and other members will talk about ways everyone will be served by the center. Though it's winter, they are already setting up their summer program of outdoor events, which they'll keep doing until the inside of the community center is also available.

The next Monterey Community Potluck Supper will be held on March 18, at 6 p.m., at the fellowship hall of the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil, and a place setting and silverware for yourself. Everyone is welcome.

—Barbara Dahlman and Kyle Pierce

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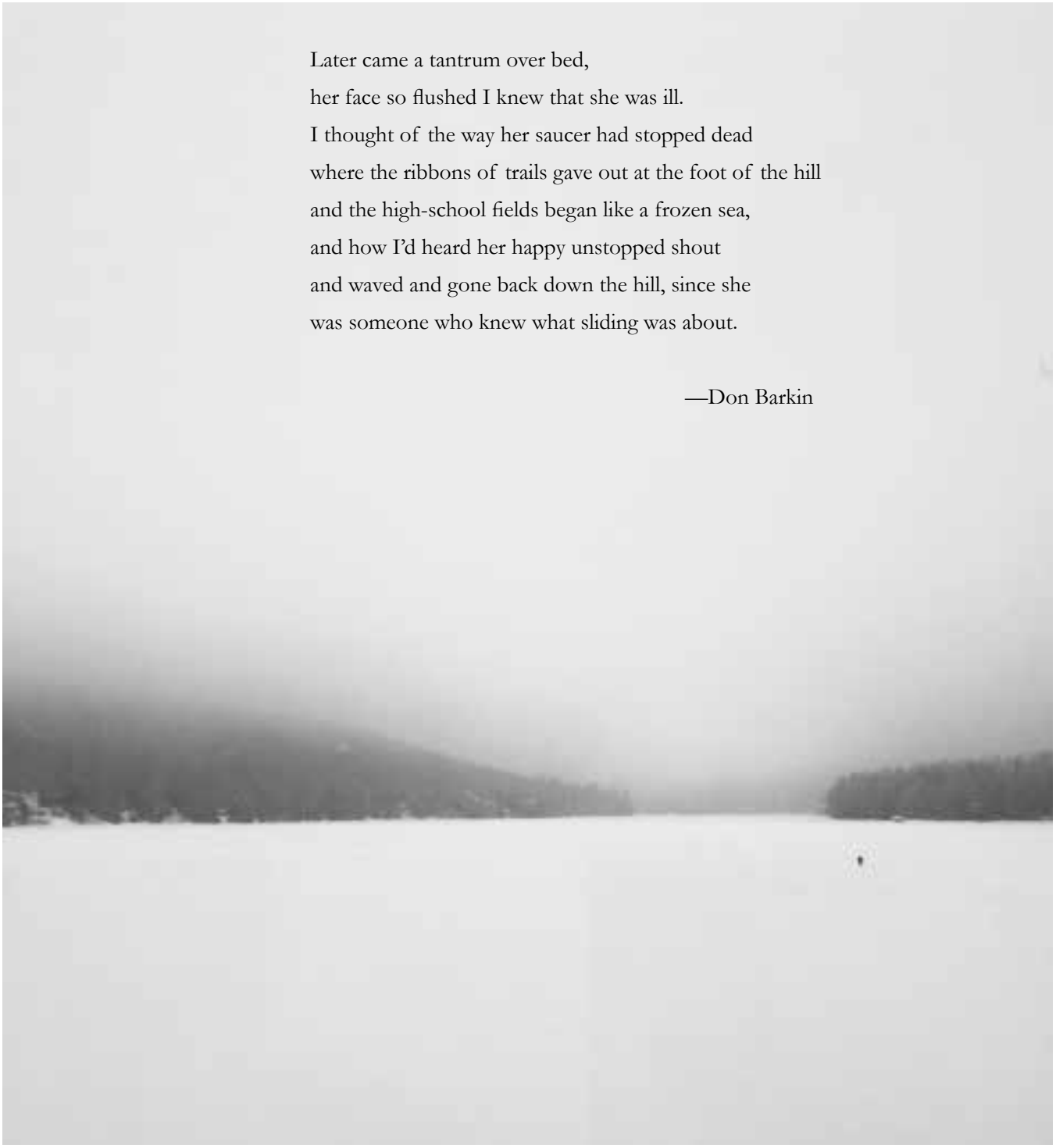
Sliding

Careless of its cargo, the saucer wended
down the hill. Our daughter, who was three,
twisted in her snowsuit when her ride had ended
and squinting into the sun so we would see
shouted, "Again!" I shuffled back down the hill
and dragged the saucer up while she dragged me.

Later came a tantrum over bed,
her face so flushed I knew that she was ill.
I thought of the way her saucer had stopped dead
where the ribbons of trails gave out at the foot of the hill
and the high-school fields began like a frozen sea,
and how I'd heard her happy unstopped shout
and waved and gone back down the hill, since she
was someone who knew what sliding was about.

—Don Barkin



Lake Garfield Snowstorm, Paul Lang

Who's Who
Bettina Schwartz

When we stood up from the table where she and I had sat, a table crowded with crafts her children were working on when not, as now, in school, I said something about how tall she is.

"Not as tall as you," she pointed out, correctly.

"Huh," I thought. "I could have sworn…"

She is Bettina Schwartz, and she was just in from her morning work at the Prairie Whale in Great Barrington, a restaurant she owns with her partner, Mark, though she might insist he owns it with her help—managing orders and vendors, employees and hiring. She laughs when she imagines herself a restaurateur, and she swears that everyone who knows her laughs at that, too. Owning a successful restaurant, after all, is a demanding—and demandingly social—experience. Bettina, for her part, is just as happy at home.

It's here where we met, here where Bettina was happily alone, except for the livestock out back (chickens, sheep) and the dog barking guard over them in the snowy field. The house is remote, set off a road that is itself set off a road. The winter wrapping around it, snow upon snow, made it seem all the more remote—and yet not quite.

I've heard native Berkshirites comment that you can always tell someone who recently moved here from New York: they keep their outdoor lights on all night long. It's a lot to get used to, after all. The quiet, the dark: it's a far cry from the city. And though you think it's what you want, having it can be a mixed experience.

Not so with Bettina. A native of Brooklyn, she moved here five years ago with Mark, their son Lucien who was then six years old, and their daughter Iris, then two. And, of course, it was a move that

Liz Goodman

brought with it dark, quiet nights, but also this—farming, running a restaurant, homeownership, and raising children in a place where you can't assume playgrounds will be full of potential friends.

Only running a restaurant was familiar, and this only by proxy. Mark had owned restaurants in Brooklyn since before he and Bettina were together, while she worked as the studio manager for photographer Sheila Metzner, a temp job that became a ten-year stint. But now the two are in it together—and not only overseeing the restaurant (its ambiance, its finances, and everything in between), but also providing some of the items on the menu. Their chickens' eggs, their lamb: these are why the food at the restaurant tastes so fresh.

"I was going to give you a tour," she said, glancing out the back window of the house, a view of snow that was formidable. "I don't think that's going to happen," she said. For my part, I had only that morning taken my snowshoes out of my car, and indoors felt fine by me. But I was sorry not to see so much of what Bettina has committed herself to.

She was smiling when she said that the learning curve for farming was steep, which I, not a farmer or even a gardener, can only imagine is an understatement. But her smile revealed something that gave light to her words: she isn't a disillusioned idealist; she's not been irritated to discover that her romantic dreams of country living are hard to realize. She's curious and capable; she succeeds at what she sets out to do, perhaps especially if it's difficult, if the learning curve is steep.

It's an impressive combination—committed but not controlling, present and reliable but open to what comes her way. Her parents, I imagine, are something of the same. Her mother is German and her father is French. Both born during the war, they lived as young adults in Switzerland, he a doctor and she a nurse. Meeting on this neutral ground, they decided together to emigrate to the U.S., to Brooklyn. There they had three children, three daughters. The oldest is Bettina. Then came Susanne, and then Julia, each one softening more their parents' hard edges and strict ways.

Bettina had it toughest, but she smiles knowingly at this too. Whatever was hard or not happy, it was so yet in love. She's close with her parents, who come to visit quite a lot, the Berkshires recalling particularly for her father his life before moving to Brooklyn.

Transfer Station Winter Hours

Sunday	10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.

Speaking of her sisters, though, Bettina corrects herself, first saying she has two, then that she *had* two. Julia died suddenly of a cardiac event when she was twenty-eight and Bettina was thirty-three. And I supposed aloud that both are true: that you have, and that you had, a sister when you lose her like that. She's never not with you, and yet she is gone.

Another break in Bettina's young adulthood came a few years earlier, during a cross-country drive that she made with a friend. Near Flagstaff, the two suffered a car accident that landed Bettina in the hospital for two months with a shattered leg. Bad as it was, it came with some luck. It happens that she couldn't have landed in a better trauma center with a better surgeon. If not for his skill, she'd likely have lost her leg. (Now she's downhill skiing with her children during these winter days, quite a comeback.)

Bettina speaks of this as a formative experience, something she had to take time to let into her life. To do so, she made a journey to India, six weeks beginning in Rajasthan, the northwestern province that borders on Pakistan. She had traveled previously, to the Dominican Republic, to Mexico. But this was furthest and in some ways most foreign of her travels.

It wasn't what she expected, though she can't say exactly what she expected. Enlightenment? Insight? Intensely urban, densely populated, New Delhi made Bettina's native New York City seem desolate in comparison. Backpacking alone through northern India in dreary weather was more stressful than strenuous, a fine line, I suppose, but one that makes the difference between an opening up and a shutting down. Leaving Rajasthan earlier than she'd planned, she traveled elsewhere in India, south and east, fifty-six hours on the train to Kerala, where sunshine and a slower pace allowed her to finally adjust to the unfamiliar rhythm of life in India.

When she returned to the States, she settled in, unknowing that what lay ahead was the beginning of life as she lives it now. Her temporary job became permanent. She met Mark at a gallery opening through her work with Ms. Metzner, and some time later they began dating, their first date being dinner at Windows on the World in the World Trade Center's North Tower; and shortly after that came Lucien, and then Iris.

Steve Graves

Monterey adult hockey is enjoying its most continuous, active season in years, thanks to the frigid weather. There has been excellent participation for the informal, noncontact pick-up games using a soft puck. Men and women of all levels play three games per week in an enclosed, outdoor rink, thanks to the support of the Monterey Parks Commission, Monterey Fire Company, and community volunteers. Games will be played until March 15, weather permitting.

She'd always known she wanted to be a mother, and it's evident when she speaks of her children that she enjoys it. The table where we sit is further evidence—cutout hearts, glue and glitter, pencils and markers. She knows that, were she not happy with the school options around here, and were her children not happy now at Muddy Brook and Monument Valley, she'd homeschool them as many of her friends back in Brooklyn do.

But not doing so makes possible her own return to education. A graduate of Cornell, class of 1992, where she majored in anthropology, she's recently enrolled in a watercolor class at I.S.183. This harks

>

Hockey Rink Schedule:

Youth hockey: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings from 7 to 9.

Adult hockey:

Tuesday and Thursdays evenings from 7 to 9.

Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30.

Mt. Everett High School hockey team plays Sunday evenings from 7 to 9.

All other times are shared with figure skaters, families, and recreational skaters—so skate responsibly! Please shovel before you leave.

For updates—call Parks Dept. at 528-1443 x248 (voicemail), or

Facebook—Monterey MA Outdoor-Skating Rink

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Bettina Schwartz, cont.

back to her earlier years as a student at LaGuardia High School of Music & Art, and she looks forward to reengaging that early interest of hers.

Suddenly, though, she sees her surroundings through a visitor's eyes. "I'm not much of a housekeeper," she admits. But who cares? There are more important things than having everything crisply in its place. Here, in Bettina's home, life is unfolding, the kitchen somewhere between breakfast and lunch, the table somewhere between homework and Valentine's Day, the space by the front door over-spilling with gear for outdoors and dress for in town.

Really, keeping house can conflict with making a home. That Bettina has managed the latter, that she has managed herself to be here at home, among snow and trees and livestock and fields, all the while managing so many other changes, is something of a marvel. I've known wanderers and gypsies and pilgrims; I've known natives and locals, rooted to place. What surprises me is when someone embodies both. To be honest, I look up to people like that, even when they're shorter than I am.

—Liz Goodman

March 15 Deadline to Apply for Summer Youth Cultural Enrichment Grants

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation has set March 15 as the deadline for applications to the Simple Gifts Fund, a fund of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation. The fund awards grants to young people ages thirteen to twenty-one for participation in cultural or creative summer programs, such as theater internships, music and art camps, or language immersion programs. Residents of Berkshire, Columbia, northeast Dutchess, and northwest Litchfield counties may apply.

Applications and guidelines are available online at BerkshireTaconic.org/SearchGrants.

The Simple Gifts Fund was established in honor of Bill Crofut by his family. Bill was a beloved local folksinger who died in 1999. He had a deep understanding of and empathy for the dreams and aspirations of young people. He wanted to do something that could help them achieve their goals and knew that even small amounts of money could help them purchase an instrument, study dance, or participate in a summer program. He loved to foster those small steps to further great passions.

To donate to the Simply Gifts Fund, please visit www.berkshiretaconic.org/Donate.

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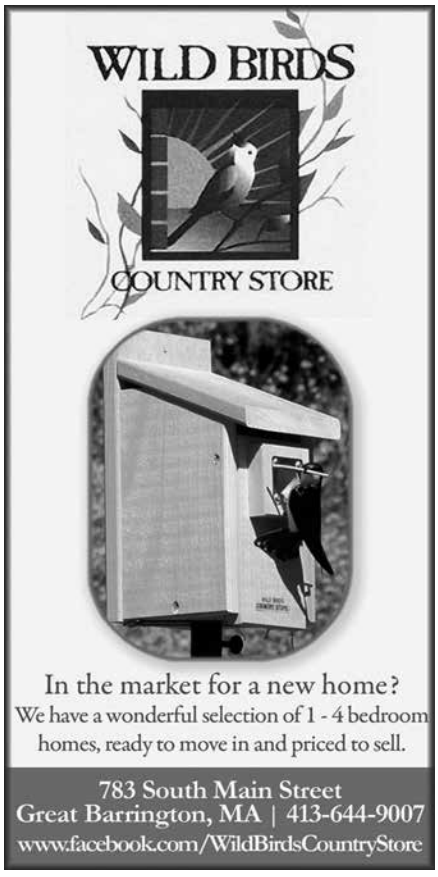
Pileated Woodpecker
Winter Nesting

Groundhog Day at mid-winter forecasted no shadow or sun-sign of an earlysSpring and almost every day we woke up to another ever-deeper covering of snow. Then an omen at first light came outside our rear porch. There came a loud rat-tat pounding as if someone was knocking on our door. "Who's that knocking on my door?" Surely not a raven, but it was black and almost as big. Jan called me to witness the seasonal wakeup call of two Pileated Woodpeckers drilling a nesting hole in the grizzled old white pine, their red heads bobbing up and down with powerful bills digging out chunky pieces of dead wood to find choice morsels of grubs. The Pileated repeatedly pauses from drilling to listen closely for the grubs moving in response to the sounds of the excavation, much like a robin running across the lawn who stops to listen or feel the vibration of an earth worm. An annual by-product of their work is to dig a cavity deep enough for winter nesting. The male will take up residence in the chosen cavity until the female is ready to lay four eggs.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George Emmons

Jody Soules of Wild Birds Country Store in Great Barrington, my kindred spirit of seasonal omens, tells me there are three local species that start nesting in February. The Pileated Woodpecker, Great Horned Owl, and Bald Eagle. Barbara Tryon tells me my Bidwell Road habitat may be the Pileated sighting capital of Monterey. Steve Weisz also reports them there, under tall white pine cathedrals that shelter his log cabin style lakeside cottage.

Pileated Woodpeckers are often mistaken for the Common Crow, which is about the same size but has a very different intermittent wing beat, resulting in an undulating flight pattern. Also, unlike the crow, they then land to stand on the trunk rather than a branch of a tree. Listen as the scarlet red plume begins to call to a mate: *yucka, yucka, yucka*. It sounds like the Woody Woodpecker laugh, the only animated cartoon with the voice of Mel Blanc to ever win an Academy Award. In her February column about Chickadee Cheerfulness, Bonner McAllester, my *Monterey News* soul mate of nature narrative, finds in wildlife positive attributes of human character and appearance, a thought process called "anthropomorphizing," leading to great creative writing and entertainment.

Felix Salten's 1923 classic, *Bambi; A Life in the Woods*, was an early anthropomorphic literary achievement. Another, a favorite of Ms. McAllester's late father,

Stephen Moore

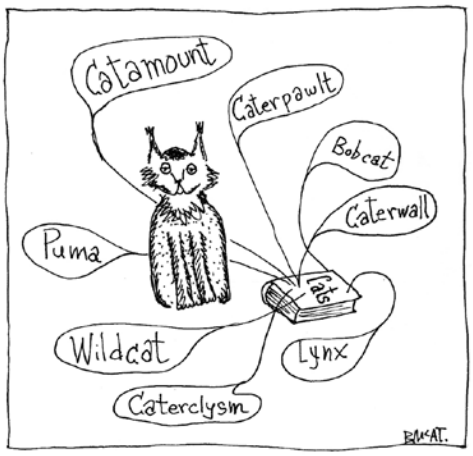
The Pileated Woodpecker bill has a fine chisel-shaped tip, allowing it to chip out surprisingly large woodchips. Look at the marks on the right side of the cavity.

David McAllester, is *Wild Animals I Have Known* by E. T. Seton. United Artists and Walt Disney have brought comic human behavior in animals to children of all ages. Television and other media gradually matured into producting the current wealth of wildlife publications and documentaries. After my young exposure to Native American lore of the mortal being in a natural world, I gladly contribute to the *Monterey News* my articles of environmental awareness, knowing that those that went before me brought it to the present high plateau. As I journey through the literary seasons, I am walking in their creative shadow.

— George Emmons

Names and Nature
The Junior Dictionary Flap

Just lately some folks have noticed the *Oxford Junior Dictionary* made a few changes in its most recent edition. This is not so very recent, 2007, but it can take awhile to find out what's missing and what's new, especially as there are ten thousand words in this book, a lot to check up on. Many of us use a dictionary to look up a spelling or a derivation, or maybe to play that great game we used to call "Dictionary," in which you find some wild obscure word that no one in the group knows, and then everyone has to make up a plausible definition and write it in dictionary-ese. All, including the real definition, are read by the principal, the one who is "it" for this round. We all vote for the one we think is real, or maybe just the one we like best. If my fake definition gets the most votes, I am high scorer for this round.



The *Oxford Junior Dictionary* is designed for seven-year-olds, but when I was seven we did not have it. In early years there were the ABC-type picture books, as in "A is for Apple." At home there was also *Webster's Collegiate, Fifth Edition, Thin Paper*. We had good eyes and we knew how to be careful with that paper. Years later we got what we called The Big Dictionary, which was too big. You went to it, on its strong shelf, turned on its dedicated floor lamp, found your word, and remembered. This book stayed where it was and did not get carried back to the supper table to have its wisdom read to all. The little collegiate was for that, the travel model. This is the one that went off to college. Lots of us got it for a high school graduation present.

The current *Junior Dictionary* flap has gone out from twenty-eight writers, poets, and naturalists who worry over choices made by Oxford. Certain wildlife and plant words such as *acorn, beaver, beech, cheetah, clover, fern,* and *raven* are no longer to be found in this first dictionary for little kids. Instead we find *MP3 player, broadband, analogue,* and *cut and paste*.

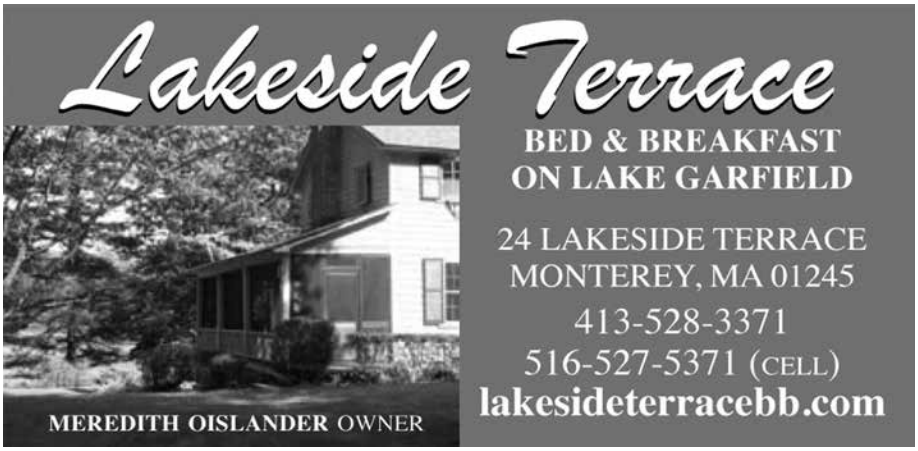
By the time the kids get to be eleven, Oxford University Press has another book for them, the *Primary Dictionary*, and *acorn* is in it, as are *mistletoe*, *sycamore*, and many outdoorsy words not in the *Junior Dictionary*. As I read the open letter from the twenty-eight scholars and writers. I think their worries are partly a longing for the good old days when Oxford's choice of words was all good. Life *was* all good, too, in our fond memories. Now the scholars urge us to interpret the Oxford University Press word choices as not only bad for the kids, but indicative of the bad beginning they get in these modern times. They don't play outside like kids used to, and so their health is not good. Even their lifespan is headed down. We realize bringing back the dictionaries of the olden days would not change the indoor lifestyle of the isolated seven-year-old on the computer. Putting *beech* in the kids' first dictionary is unlikely to send anyone out to play under a tree when the MP3 player beckons indoors. It's just that we would feel better knowing the word for that great tree was available in print form, should anyone be looking for it.

Most of us speak words more than we look them up or read them. We hear them spoken and then we make them ours and speak them ourselves, keep them in play. We may even take a stand and use words that are endangered, so we keep them alive. I do my best with *wildcat,* because I like how it makes me feel. Also I remember my dad, who used it, and I salute a pal here in Monterey who is adamant about it. Then there is *catamount,* originally *cat o' mount* or *cat of the mountain*. I could have sworn it also meant a "big waterfall o' mountain," but no. This must be from when I was seven playing the dictionary game, looking for votes.

Here in Monterey in early May there is a little bit of flying nature that bites and comes in swarms. Most folks speak of these as "blackflies," look them up like that in the dictionary and write of them as such. Not in Monterey! Here these are called "mayflies," no doubt because they come in May and besides that's what everyone here calls them. There is an unrelated slightly larger insect of the same name, of interest to fly fishermen. These don't bite and the trout go for them, also for lures that look like them.

Here when we say, "The mayflies sure are bad this year," it is not about fishing or hooks. Here, when a friend visits from Europe and says, "There is an elk in that swamp," we will look and see a moose. Our European or English friend sees tits in the orchard, and we see chickadees. If none of these things are in the *Oxford Junior Dictionary*, it's probably just as well. Local parlance will teach the kids all these words, one version or another. They may go through life like me thinking a mountain waterfall has something to do with big wildcats, and maybe it does. It always will for me.

—Bonner McAllester



Conservation Commission
Important Steps for Your Project

The Monterey Conservation Commission (Commission) continues the series of informational articles for property owners by focusing this segment on the background and regulatory requirements of the Berkshire Scenic Mountain Act (SMA) as adopted by the Town of Monterey.

Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 131, Section 39A, towns in Berkshire County were granted the opportunity to designate their respective conservation commissions as the town authority to carry out the provisions of the SMA. Monterey residents designated their Commission as the regulatory authority at the town meeting held on May 3, 2003. Similar to state regulations promulgated under the state Wetlands Protection Act, the regulations under the SMA are not intended to prohibit projects but are, in this case, designed to protect the natural resources defined in the act by avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating the impact of activities that involve excavation, construction, clearing, and filling of certain visually significant mountain regions of the town.

The underlying environmental principles and purpose of the SMA are twofold: to protect the watershed resources and to preserve the natural qualities of the mountain regions in Monterey. First, a watershed is defined as a land area or drainage basin that drains into a particular watercourse (river or stream) or body of water (lake or pond). For example, the watershed of Lake Buel comprises 3,268 acres—when rain falls on this area of ground, the water flows downhill and ultimately into that lake. The alteration of mountain ridges or steep slopes caused by unregulated excavation, construction, or clearing of the vegetative ground cover may result in severe erosion with the loss of soil, flooding, and the uncontrolled runoff of pollutants into a given body of water at a lower elevation. From an aesthetic perspective, the alteration of steep slopes or mountain ridges may also result in visual scarring that changes the scenic qualities of the area. The breathtaking, scenic beauty of the Berkshire mountains are both appreciated and valued by so many visitors and residents alike that they are the focus of protection under the SMA.

At this point, it is also helpful to define a few more key terms used in the SMA. The term *alteration* includes, but is not limited to, the following actions conducted within the aforementioned mapped mountain regions of Monterey: (a) removal, filling, excavation, or dredging of any soil, sand, rock, or aggregate material in excess of twenty cubic yards; (b) changing of pre-existing drainage characteristics, sedimentation, and flow patterns; (c) drainage or disturbance of existing watercourses or water table; (d) removal or destruction of more than 5,000 square feet of plant life, including tree clearing; (e) the erection of any building or structure with a footprint in excess of 500 square feet or at a height in excess of twenty-two feet; (f) substantial change in topographic or scenic features; (g) construction or paving of a new road or parking lot greater than 800 square feet; (h) dumping or discharging of any materials except where it is necessary to stockpile for the project. *Ridgeline* is defined as the ground surface, rather than the tops of trees, along a mountain top. *Scenic* means vistas, open space, woodlands, fields, meadows, and agricultural lands that contribute to preserving the natural visual qualities of the environment. Finally, a *steep slope* refers to those areas with slopes averaging over 15 percent or greater over a horizontal distance of two hundred feet.

Let us look more specifically at the regulatory provisions of the SMA. From a jurisdictional point of view, the Commission regulates proposed activities or projects in two elevation areas of the town—all areas above 1,500 feet, and all areas below 1,500 feet where a project is located on a steep slope—which are specifically shown on the approved map titled "Town of Monterey, Scenic Mountain Act Mapped Mountain Regions" (adopted by the select board on March 8, 2004). The SMA regulatory process is very similar to that of the Wetlands Protection Act (WPA), which is also administered by the Commission.

Given that the WPA regulatory process was presented in detail in February edition of the Monterey News, the following is only a summary of the SMA process. When considering an application, the >

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Scenic Mountain Act, cont.

Commission will make certain presumptions that: (1) man-made buildings or structures above ridge lines damage natural scenic qualities; (2) clearing of contiguous regulated lands totaling one-half acre or more damages natural scenic qualities and/or causes erosion; (3) alteration of steep slopes causes erosion and promotes flooding, and as a result damages water quality and degrades scenic qualities.

These presumptions are also included with all applicable state standards applied to the administration of the SMA by the Commission. If an applicant believes that the SMA does not apply to an area or the proposed work is not likely to have a significant adverse impact on the watershed resources or natural scenic qualities, they may submit a Request Determination of Applicability (RDA) on Form A to the Commission.

The RDA shall include sufficient information including design drawings, erosion controls, drainage design, plans to demonstrate the scope of the project, and the mitigating measures to protect the watershed and natural scenic quality. The Commission will make a preliminary determination on Form B, a Determination of Applicability. The Commission may require the applicant to submit more detailed and extensive information in a Notice of Intent (NOI) on Form C. Also, all permits, variances, and approvals required by law must be sent to the Commission prior to the issuance of the NOI. Following the submission of a complete NOI, a public hearing shall be advertised and held, and the abutters of land adjacent to the project shall also be notified. After the hearing, the Commission may impose reasonable conditions to mitigate the project impacts through an Order of Conditions on Form D.

An appeals process may be initiated by many parties on a procedural basis or due to disagreements with the reasonableness of the conditions. Parties who can appeal include the applicant, the state Department of Conservation Recreation (DCR), the executive office of Environmental Affairs, any abutter of land, and any ten town residents. If the DCR determines that the order issued by the Commission was at fault, they may issue a superseding order. Likewise if any person is aggrieved by the superseding order of the DCR, they may appeal under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A.

When the activity is completed, the applicant may request a Certificate of Compliance with the order. Following an on-site inspection, the Commission may either issue the certificate, deny it or any portion of the project, or extend the order to enable the applicant to complete the project in compliance with the order and obtain the certificate. Also, if the Commission finds that the project was completed in such a manner that the provisions of the SMA were violated, then certain enforcement options are available to the Commission including revocation of the order, and civil or criminal actions.

Finally, the following is a list of exemptions to the SMA: cutting of the forest under the Forest Cutting Practices Act; activities regulated under the WPA; construction or maintenance of any gas or electric facility; construction or maintenance of any electrical transmission or distribution facilities used in the transmission of intelligence by electricity or telephone; construction or maintenance of any electrical distribution facilities serving a building or structure approved under the SMA. SMA exemptions also include the maintenance of existing, but not new or expanded, farming-agricultural lands in current use; plantings of native trees/shrubs/groundcover; pruning of landscaped areas, vista pruning, and ordinary gardening, landscaping, maintenance, and repairs on existing residential properties.

The Commission hopes that this article is helpful. Please don't hesitate to contact the Commission with any questions about this or any other related environmental issues at: admin@mountereyma.gov

—Monterey Conservation Commission

McLaughlin-Wilson, Other Berkshire Scholarships Applications Due April 1

Thirty-one scholarship funds for students in Berkshire County managed by Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (BTCF) are available, with applications due by April 1. Guidelines and application information are available online at BerkshireTaconic.org/SearchScholarships. Some scholarships are specifically available to students in our immediate area.

Of special concern to Monterey students is the McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship Fund. Students who have lived in Monterey for the last two years of high school are eligible for scholarships ranging from $1,000 to $7,500, which may include awards over multiple years. Merit is the primary criterion.

The majority of BTCF's scholarships accept one common application with a few exceptions where noted.

Bidwell House Museum
2015 High School Internships

Monterey's own colonial history museum is again offering high school students with an interest in history—particularly local Berkshire colonial history—the opportunity to become a Young History Scholar Intern this summer. The museum will offer eight to ten students the chance to get an inside view of the historic house and the operations of a nonprofit organization.

The Bidwell House Museum is a 1750s New England heritage site providing through its land, house, and collection a personal encounter with frontier life in early America. The museum includes the fully furnished colonial homestead, several outbuildings, and 192 acres of grounds with gardens, stonewalls, foundations, and hiking trails.

High school interns spend two weeks at the museum: in week one the intern learns about colonial Berkshire history, the Bidwell family, the house, the property, and the collection, and how docents give tours; in week two each intern chooses a research topic and begins to give tours of the museum as a junior docent.

"Student interns learn to tell the story of the Bidwell House to visitors, and they get to meet people from all over the country, who are amazed at how smart and well-educated Berkshire teens are," noted Barbara Palmer, executive director of the museum. "Students gain skills in research, public speaking, and working in a professional environment. It's really a great skill builder for future studies and careers."

Recent summer interns have come from the following towns: Adams, Lenox, New Marlborough, Monterey, Sandisfield, South Lee, Tyringham, and Fort Mill, SC and have attended Albany Academy, Lenox Memorial Middle and High School, Monument Mountain High School, and Mt. Everett Regional High School.

Thanks in part to grants from the Monterey, Lenox, and Great Barrington cultural councils, as well as private sponsors and friends of the museum, each high school intern receives a $200 stipend for the two-week internship. The museum is also seeking a college student for an eight-week internship.

Photos courtesy of the Bidwell House Museum.

Bidwell interns Ben Ketcham, Justin Makuc, Madelinne Pope, and Joe Makuc on the museum's porch.

The internship application can be found on the museum's website: BidwellHouseMuseum.org.

Deadline for applications is April 30, and applicants will be invited for an interview. Please call or email Barbara Palmer, executive director of the museum, with any questions: bidwellhouse@gmail.com, 413-528-6888.

—Barbara Palmer

Bidwell interns Marya Makuc and Ella Carlson organized the baking contest at Township No. 1 Day last July.

Winter rime ice on a small branch. v

M. Banner

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2015 February Wildlife

Birds, cats, and dogs— and a deer rescue

Since we got our deep snow and cold, the birds have been especially glad of the feeders, including some very big birds. Ed Salsitz and Arrie Setiawati have seen a turkey flying in and out of their yard, picking up the little seeds below the feeder. The Edelman family on Hupi Road have had a young turkey, maybe a female, at home in their yard for several days. She flies through the thick woods, also wades through deep snow, with no problem.

Suzanne Sawyer reports Common Redpolls at the feeder late in January, also Cedar Waxwings eating berries on the bushes by Hevreh in Great Barrington. Steve Moore and Wendy Jensen have seen waxwings, too, on New Marlboro Road, in a flock of eighteen or twenty. The birds were joined by a pair of bluebirds, "the male already in bright-blue breeding plumage," Steve writes.

Wendy Benjamin saw a coyote in a field off Tyringham Road, and Barbara Tryon tells of a handsome bobcat, or wildcat, walking across a field at her place. "You can tell it's a cat. It doesn't move like a dog."

Late in January, Nadia and Mark Makuc went out skating on Lake Garfield and discovered a deer in trouble on the ice. Somehow it had run out onto the smooth ice, then slipped and fallen, and now could not stand without falling again and again. Justin came to help with a rope, and they were able to get this around the deer for support and help in guiding it to shore. There it lay still at first, Nadia said, until it saw that all the people were looking the other way. Then it was up and off, seeming fine. Before, when it was down on the ice, the deer had let out some deep moans, almost like a cow in trouble, Nadia reports.

I got a call from a neighbor who might have seen a bear. We headed out into the snowy woods, thinking this was the dead of winter and all bears should be sleeping. In the end we decided that they still are, after all. As much as we looked and believed, we could not find any bear or tracks of a bear.

Joe Baker heard a Hairy Woodpecker drumming. This is different from whacking away at a tree for a meal. Woodpeckers have specific drumming messages about spring interests such as territory and other things.

Thanks for all your sightings and stories, and your photos.

— Bonner McAllester
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School Counselors

I've been fortunate to benefit from a lot of counselors in life, both formal and informal. The informal counselors are mentors, full of great life-advice that helps me navigate the twists and turns of growing up and building my life as a young adult. The formal counselors have been an important sounding board, often mirroring my thoughts back in a way that built self-awareness. In high school, college, and the real world, these individuals support growth while providing a safe place to step into, out of the chaotic pace of life. I suspect I am not alone in this experience, and that many people know the value of a shoulder to lean on or a sympathetic ear.

Life can be overwhelming and stressful, no matter how old someone is. And for students, they will be navigating social dynamics, trying to juggle homework, and ultimately think about their futures. Even under the best of circumstances, things are stressful. For students without a stable home environment, or who lack financial security, the challenges and stresses are even more significant.

Many public schools lack the resources to hire the appropriate number of school counselors; the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommends a ratio of 250:1. Statistics suggest most schools don't even come close. As a result, school counselors are doing their best to provide support and opportunity to hundreds of students, but with limited time and resources. They contend with students who are hungry, homeless, in trouble for fighting or acting out, and that's before they get to provide support for planning for college and careers, by organizing family evenings to fill out the FAFSA or helping students plan their senior year course-work plan.

Each year ASCA nominates school counselors across the country for their National School Counselor of the Year award. The finalists come to DC for a day on Capitol Hill lobbying for the importance of their work and the counseling profession. They also are honored at a gala hosted by the association. Then, the following week is National School Counseling Week (usually the first week of February).

As a function of my job, I've been fortunate enough to attend the lunch event on Capitol Hill the past three years and the gala for the past two. It's inspiring to listen to passionate professionals discuss the rigor of their work while weaving in the personal narratives of their students. One of my favorite presentations from this year was when an elementary school counselor from Virginia discussed how she's integrating a focus on college and career into programs and activities for some of our youngest learners.

This year was exciting for a different reason, though. For the first time, the winner was recognized at a White House ceremony hosted by Michelle Obama and actress Connie Britton. It was one of the most thrilling days I've had in my past three and a half years in Washington, because everyone was there to celebrate school counselors, and they were finally getting this national limelight. The White House often honors the National Teacher of the Year and other education award winners. The First Lady has started an initiative called Reach Higher that focuses on college-and-career preparation for students in the K-12 education system. And she and her supporters have understandably recognized the instrumental role of school counselors in this work.

The entire afternoon had a festive, joyful atmosphere, the speeches were lively and heartfelt, and then the reception gave us free run of most of the East Wing. We were able to take pictures, walk around, eat delicious food, sit in furniture, mingle, and yes, sip on bubbly and other refreshments. The critics among us may bemoan such extravagant celebrations using taxpayer dollars, but our educators are public servants and they often go unappreciated. It was such an honor to attend such a well-conceived tribute to their efforts.

Even with the excitement of being able to wander around, explore, and document the experience, I also took time to remember some of the conversations with my various counselors over the years. Those individuals, in key moments, helped me build confidence and plan how to chase my dreams to the point where I was able to be part of this wonderful day. And so, I raised my glass to them and their commitment, and I can only wish that all children might find that same support someday.

—Tarsi Dunlop

❊

DENNIS J. DOWNING
Attorney at Law

❊

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Select Board Corner

Welcome to the Select Board Corner. Our goal is to submit an article each month to the *Monterey News* to keep everyone up to date on important issues, office closings, highway projects, etc. This article may be especially important for those who cannot access our website. This is a work in progress, and we welcome any comments or suggestions on the articles.

www.MontereyMA.gov

Our town website is a great way to access information about the town.

Meetings and Events

Agricultural Commission: First Friday, March 6, at 10:30 a.m.
Board of Health: Monday, March 2 and 16, at 4 p.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.
Conservation Commission: Tuesday, March 10, at 6 p.m.
Council on Aging: Wednesdays, March 11 and 25, at 10 a.m.
Foot nurse: Thursday, March 12, 9 to 11:30 a.m., by appointment (call 528-1598).
Parks Commission: Wednesday, March 4, at 6 p.m.
Planning Board: Thursdays, March 12 and 26, at 7 p.m. Please call Maggie Leonard at 528-9685 to be placed on the agenda.
Select Board meetings: Mondays, March 2, 16, 23, and 30 at 8:30 a.m. (administrative business from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.), and March 9, at 4 p.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Office/Town Hall Closings:

Individual office closings are posted on the town calendar and on the department's voicemail message.
We recommend calling ahead to check before coming in.

Question of the Month

The Select Board will be reevaluating the question of the month format and will return in April.

Last month's question asked, "We have a very uneven system of volunteerism in Monterey. Some boards and commissions are paid a stipend and some are entirely made up of volunteers. Would you be in favor of instituting small stipends to boards and commissions (such as the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Parks Commission, etc.), which are currently comprised of volunteers?" 61 people responded with 43% in favor and 57% opposed.

Other News

Winter road maintenance has been a large concern to the Select Board and the highway department, given the deep cold and the amount of snow.

The board has provided information on winter roads practice, especially during winter storms. Please see page 4.

—Wayne Burkhart, Chair
Scott Jenssen and Kenn Basler
Monterey Select Board

Town Contact Information

Emergency! 911
Administrative Assistant:
528-1443 x111
admin@montereyma.gov
(for town boards and misc. questions)
Assessor: 528-1443 x115
assessors@montereyma.gov
Building Dept.: 528-1443 x118
buildingsafety@montereyma.gov
Fire Department (non-emergency):
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fire_service@montereyfire.org
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montereytax@yahoo.com
(for questions about your tax bill)
Town Clerk: 528-1443 x113
clerk@montereyma.gov
(for licenses and town records)

At the special town meeting, February 26, voters considered twenty-one articles including approval of the SBRSD roof and boiler project, a new town truck, money for Lake Garfield milfoil removal, and money to complete Jamie's Court. See p. 5.

Calendar

Every Monday except holidays: Select Board meetings. See p. 26.

Every Tuesday: Chair Yoga with Connie Wilson, 9–10 a.m., Monterey Town Hall. Free, sponsored by Monterey Parks Commission.

Through Saturday, March 21: *The Magical Ravine off Wallace Hall Road: Watercolors*, by Alan Roland Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, see p. 9.

Tuesdays, March 3, 17, and 31: Sewing circle, 10-11:30 a.m., Monterey Library.

Saturday, March 7:

Democratic town committee meeting, 10:30 a.m., firehouse.

Children's book group, 7 p.m., Monterey Library.

Sunday, March 8: "Spring Ahead," daylight saving time, 2 a.m.

Wednesdays, March 11 and 25: Council on Aging "Meet and Greet," 10 a.m., Town Hall meeting room.

Thursday, March 12:

Council on Aging, foot care clinic, 9-11:30 a.m., town hall meeting room. Call Maryellen Brown at 518-1598 for an appointment.

Note: Free blood pressure clinic has been canceled for March.

Planning board hearing on accessory dwellings, 7 p.m., town hall. See p.2.

Wednesday, March 18: Community Potluck Supper, 6 p.m., Monterey Fellowship Hall. What's Next for the Monterey Community Center? See p.14.

Friday, March 20: *Monterey News* deadline

Saturday, March 21:

Democratic town caucus meeting, 10:30 a.m., firehouse. See p. 7.

Lenox Contradance, Live music by Shindy with Randy Miller on fiddle, Roger Kahle on guitar, and Ross Kahle on whistle and bodhran, with dances called by Steve Zakon-Anderson. 8-11:30, new dancers come at 8. All dances taught. $10 adults, $5 students. Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker St. www.LenoxContraDance.org, 413-528-4007.

Sunday, March 22: Republican town caucus, 1 p.m., church basement. See p. 6.

Monday, March 23: Adult book group, 7:30 p.m., Monterey Library, will discuss *Dear Committee Members: A Novel* by Julie Schumacher. Newcomers are always welcome.

Friday, March 27: *SPACE-out-LINED: Paintings and Photographs*, by Meryl Wilen-Greenfield, opens at the Knox Gallery, Monterey Library. See p. 10.

Saturday, March 28: Opening reception, *SPACE-out-LINED: Paintings and Photographs*, by Meryl Wilen-Greenfield, 6-7:30 p.m. The artist will talk briefly about her influences, work, and process at 6:45 p.m. Knox Gallery, Monterey Library. See p. 10.

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. Our editorial address is PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may also be sent to the email address below. Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4007 or email montereynews9@gmail.com.

Winter Spikes
(Special thanks to Maureen Banner for so many snowy-cold photos this month.)

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Contributions from local artists this month:
George Emmons, p. 19; Bonner McAllester, p. 20.

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